



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

July 29, 2005

News Release

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATOR ORDERED REMOVED BY IMMIGRATION JUDGE IN ATLANTA

ATLANTA—A 54 year-old man suspected of committing numerous acts of torture in his native Ethiopia was ordered deported on Tuesday by Immigration Judge William A. Cassidy. This case represents the first removal order obtained by ICE under the new authorities of the recently-enacted Intelligence Reform Act of 2004. Kelbessa Negewo was responsible for arresting, torturing and killing perceived political opponents in his native Ethiopia.

During the 1970's, a military dictatorship led by Mengistu Haile Mariam and known as the "the Dergue" ruled Ethiopia. Negewo served as chairman of the Higher Zone 9, one of several specialized units in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, which employed a campaign of torture, arbitrary imprisonment, and summary executions against perceived enemies of the government. The campaign was known as "Red Terror."

Negewo came to the United States as a student in August 1987 on an F-visa. In 1988, Negewo applied for and ultimately obtained immigration benefits in this country. He later adjusted to a permanent resident. Ultimately, he became a citizen.

ICE agents subsequently initiated an investigation into Negewo who was living and working in the metro Atlanta area. Several of his torture victims who had relocated from Ethiopia to Atlanta had encountered him in the city by chance.

The ICE investigation revealed that Negewo had made false statements about his past human rights violations to obtain U.S. citizenship. As a result of the investigation, Negewo's U.S. citizenship was revoked in October 2004. On January 4, 2005, ICE agents arrested Negewo and placed him into custody. His arrest was the first arrest of a human rights violator under the new authorities of the recently enacted Intelligence Reform Act of 2004. The Intelligence Reform Act amendment adds the commission of acts of torture and/or extrajudicial killings as grounds for inadmissibility and deportability. Under this amendment, ICE has expanded authorities to pursue investigations and

removals against human rights violators in the United States. Negewo was placed in removal proceedings and after two days of testimony, which began on July 25, 2005, Immigration Judge William A. Cassidy denied all relief. Negewo was ordered removed from the United States on July 26, 2005.

Negewo's removal is the latest accomplishment under ICE's ongoing initiative to identify, apprehend, prosecute, and remove human rights violators. ICE attorneys are currently tracking and litigating more than 900 cases involving human rights violators from more than 85 countries nationwide. ICE encourages the public to come forward with any information they may have regarding human rights abusers residing in the United States. Tips can be reported at 1-866- DHS-2ICE.

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ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.